

Remarks and Arguments

Claims 1-42 were presented for examination. Claims 1, 15 and 29 have been amended.

Claims 1 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite for lack of antecedent bases. In particular, the examiner commented that, claim 1, line 12, and claim 15, line 12, recite the phrase “the secure browser program” which lacks antecedent basis. In response, claims 1 and 15 have been amended to change the phrase “the secure browser program” to “the secure viewer program” which finds antecedent basis in claim 1, lines 10-11 and claim 15, line 11, respectively. A similar change has been made to claim 29.

Claims 1, 2, 7-11, 15, 16, 21-25, 29, 30 and 35-39 have been rejected as obvious over U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0071559 (Christensen) in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0078159 (Petrogiannis.) The examiner comments that the Christensen reference discloses all of the claimed limitations with the exception that it does not disclose preparing an email message in a content server that contains a link to a publisher, then sending the email message to a recipient who logs onto a forwarding server at the publisher, sends the link to the publisher and downloads a secure viewer program. However, the examiner asserts that the Petrogiannis reference discloses a proponent preparing an email message that contains a link to a publisher and sending the email message to a recipient who logs onto a forwarding server at the publisher, sends the link to the publisher and downloads a secure viewer program. The examiner concludes that it would have been obvious to combine the teachings of Christensen and Petrogiannis in order to reduce the unauthorized use of content as suggested in Christensen.

The present invention relates to a method and apparatus for allowing a user who is connected to a content server and who is reviewing a document to request that the document be forwarded to another “recipient” user. In response to this request, a forwarding engine in the content server prepares an e-mail message that contains a link to the document publisher and an identifier for the document. Upon receiving the e-mail, the recipient user can log onto a content server in the publisher. The publisher content server resolves the link, downloads a secure viewer program and an encrypted

version of the requested document to the viewer program. Subsequently, the secure viewer program requests a decryption key for the encrypted document and decrypts the document. The recipient user can then view the document content in the secure viewer but cannot copy or print the document without permission from the publisher. In this manner, the recipient user can securely obtain a copy of the document merely by logging onto the forwarding server without entering document IDs or becoming involved with the details of obtaining the document.

The Christensen reference discloses a system for preventing illegal copying in which, upon a request from a user for a document (the request may include a document identifier), the document content is encrypted with an encryption key specific to that user and the encrypted content is then sent to that user along with the decryption key. After decrypting the document, the decryption key is either destroyed immediately or stored in an inaccessible location in the computer. If the key is destroyed, each time a recipient user wishes to view the unencrypted document, a new decryption key must be requested from the document publisher. If the key is internally stored, the number of documents decrypted by the recipient user can be controlled. As the examiner notes, the Christensen reference discloses nothing about forwarding emails to the recipient users.

The Petrogiannis reference discloses a system that allows a "proponent" to electronically "sign" a document and send it to a correspondent. In the disclosed system, the proponent first prepares the document to be signed using a proponent server. The proponent then generates a message for the correspondent including the document, a unique ID and password associated to the correspondent, and a URL that allows the correspondent to access the proponent server. This information is then emailed to the correspondent. The correspondent receives the e-mail and uses the received information to login at the URL sent by the proponent, giving the unique ID and password included in the email message to gain access to the system. Once the proponent server is accessed, an enrollment application is automatically downloaded to the correspondent terminal. After enrolling, the correspondent can use an application in the proponent server to either verify the forwarded document or verify and sign the forwarded document.

The examiner suggests that the user disclosed in the Christensen reference corresponds to the claimed recipient user in that the user's computer sends a document ID to a server and receives an encrypted document. The examiner further suggests that the correspondent in Petrogiannis also corresponds to the claimed recipient user and that the proponent corresponds to the claimed user. If that correspondence is made, then the combination of Christensen and Petrogiannis suggested by the examiner does not produce the claimed system. Claim 1 is illustrative. It recites, in step (a), "... in response to a request from the user, preparing in the content server, an e-mail message that contains a link to the publisher and an identifier for the document ...". However, as disclosed, the Petrogiannis email not only includes the unencrypted document to be signed by the correspondent (recipient user), but the included ID refers not to the document, as claimed, but instead to the recipient user. The ID allows the recipient user to logon to the proponent server with a password also provided in the email. No ID is needed for the document because the recipient user already has the document.

In addition, in Petrogiannis, a "proponent" prepares and sends the email. The proponent is defined as a company or individual (see Petrogiannis paragraph [0044]) in contrast to the content server as claimed in claim 1.

Further, claim 1 recites, in lines 10-12, "... (c) receiving and resolving the link at the publisher and downloading a secure viewer program to the recipient user and an encrypted version of the requested document to the secure viewer program ...". The "applet" downloaded in Petrogiannis is not a secure viewer program, but a program that downloads browser plug-in components that allow the user to log on to the proponent server. The document, which is already downloaded to the recipient user, is then processed at the proponent server. The Christensen reference also does not disclose downloading a secure viewer program. It does disclose controlling the storage and reproduction of downloaded content, but this control is effected by checking the receiving computer and output device characteristics before downloading the decryption key.

Consequently, the combination of Christensen and Petrogiannis does not teach or suggest the combination recited in claim 1 and claim 1 patentably distinguishes over

the cited reference combination. Claims 2 and 7-11 are dependent on claim 1 and incorporate the limitations thereof. Therefore, they distinguish over the cited references in the same manner as claim 1. In addition, these claims recite further limitations not taught or suggested by the cited reference combination. For example, claims 2, 8, 9 and 11 recite making a content request with a secure viewer program, downloading a secure viewer program into a user's browser, downloading the document identifier to the secure viewer program and downloading the decryption key to the secure viewer program, respectively. As discussed above, the combination of Christensen and Petrogiannis does not disclose or suggest a secure viewer program. Therefore, these claims distinguish over the cited references for these reasons also.

Claim 15 contains limitations that parallel those in claim 1 and consequently distinguishes over the cited reference combination in the same manner as claim 1. Claims 16 and 21-25 are dependent on claim 15 and incorporate the limitations thereof. Therefore, they distinguish over the cited references in the same manner as claim 15. In addition, claims 16, 22, 23 and 25 recite limitations that parallel those in claims 2, 8, 9, and 11 and distinguish over the references for the reasons discussed above with respect to the latter claims.

Claim 29 contains limitations that parallel those in claim 1 and consequently distinguishes over the cited reference combination in the same manner as claim 1. Claims 30 and 35-39 are dependent on claim 29 and incorporate the limitations thereof. Therefore, they distinguish over the cited references in the same manner as claim 29. In addition, claims 30, 36, 37 and 39 recite limitations that parallel those in claims 2, 8, 9, and 11 and distinguish over the references for the reasons discussed above with respect to the latter claims.

Claims 3-6, 12, 17-20, 26, 31-34 and 40 have been rejected as obvious over U.S. Christensen in view of Petrogiannis and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0117247 (Agrawal.) The examiner comments that the Christensen and Petrogiannis references disclose all of the claimed limitations with the exception that they do not disclose that the link in the email sent to the recipient user contains information identifying the sender and recipient embedded in the email URL. However, the examiner asserts that the concept of embedding such information is disclosed in

Agrawal and concludes that it would have been obvious to combine the teaching of Christensen and Petrogiannis with those of Agrawal in order to reduce the unauthorized use of content.

The Agrawal reference discloses a system that persists an electronic commerce transaction even if the purchaser is not registered with the seller. The system embeds information identifying the purchaser or the goods that are part of the transaction in the URL of the seller's website. Thus, the next time that purchaser wants to interact with the seller and enters this latter URL into his browser, the seller's website can extract the information from the URL and resume the electronic commerce transaction at the point where it was previously stopped.

Claims 3-6 and 12 are dependent on claim 1 and incorporate the limitations thereof. As discussed above the combination of Christensen and Petrogiannis does not teach or suggest these limitations. Adding Agrawal to this combination cannot teach or suggest the missing teachings since Agrawal is not directed to securely downloading documents and relates only to electronic commerce transactions. Therefore, claims 3-6 and 12 patentably distinguish over the cited combination of Christensen, Petrogiannis and Agrawal.

Claims 17-20 and 26 are dependent on claim 15 and incorporate the limitations thereof. As discussed above the combination of Christensen and Petrogiannis does not teach or suggest these limitations and adding Agrawal to this combination does not change this teaching. Therefore, claims 17-20 and 26 patentably distinguish over the cited combination of Christensen, Petrogiannis and Agrawal.

Claims 31-34 and 40 are dependent on claim 29 and incorporate the limitations thereof. As discussed above the combination of Christensen and Petrogiannis does not teach or suggest these limitations and adding Agrawal to this combination does not change this teaching. Therefore, claims 31-34 and 40 patentably distinguish over the cited combination of Christensen, Petrogiannis and Agrawal.

Claims 13, 27 and 41 have been rejected as obvious over U.S. Christensen in view of Petrogiannis and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0087661 (Machuk.) The examiner comments that the Christensen and Petrogiannis references disclose all of the claimed limitations with the exception that they do not disclose a link

that maintains a count of the number of times it has been selected. However, the examiner asserts that the concept of a link maintaining a count of the number of times it has been selected is disclosed in Matichuk and concludes that it would have been obvious to combine the teaching of Christensen and Petrogiannis with those of Matichuk in order to reduce the unauthorized use of content.

The Matichuk reference discloses a system in which a user's digital video recorder can be automatically programmed via a web browser by clicking on hyperlinks displayed in the web browser which hyperlinks link to other web sites providing the video content which is to be recorded. Matichuk claim 4, to which the examiner refers, recites that the other web sites maintain a count of the number of times a link to them is selected. However, present claims 13, 27 and 41 recite that the link itself maintains a count of the number of times it is selected. Consequently, the combination of Christensen, Petrogiannis and Matichuk does not teach or suggest the invention as claimed.

Claims 14, 28 and 42 have been rejected as obvious over U.S. Christensen in view of Petrogiannis further in view of Matichuk and still further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0103044 (Vandewater.) The examiner comments that the Christensen, Petrogiannis and Matichuk references disclose all of the claimed limitations with the exception that they do not disclose that the link is a one-time link. However, the examiner asserts that the concept of a one-time is disclosed in Vandewater and concludes that it would have been obvious to combine the teaching of Christensen, Petrogiannis and Matichuk with those of Vandewater in order to reduce the unauthorized use of content.

The Vandewater reference discloses a digital content playback system in which users can link to a presentation of the content via a link that can be used for a limited number of times. The use of such a link allows the content to be viewed for promotional purposes without permitting unlimited copying. Claims 14, 28 and 42 are dependent on claims 13, 27 and 41 and incorporate the limitations thereof. As discussed above, the combination of Christensen, Petrogiannis and Matichuk does not disclose the limitations recited in claims 13, 27 and 41. Since Vandewater also does not disclose a link that itself maintains a count of the number of times it is selected, the combination of

Christensen, Petrogiannis and Matichuk with Vandewater does not disclose the invention as claimed. Therefore, claims 14, 28 and 42 patentably distinguish over the cited reference combination.

In light of the forgoing amendments and remarks, this application is now believed in condition for allowance and a notice of allowance is earnestly solicited. If the examiner has any further questions regarding this amendment, he is invited to call applicants' attorney at the number listed below. The examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fees or direct any payment under 37 C.F.R. §§1.17, 1.16 to Deposit Account number 50-3969.

Respectfully submitted

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